

ARTS INSIDER

September 2025

INSIDER

CHARLES COUNTY ARTS ALLIANCE



"Queen's Anne Lace" By Sally Goldsmith

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Dear CCAA Members and Friends,

I'm writing this letter with profound shock and sadness. My dear friend, Cindy Johnson, passed away unexpectedly this past Monday, September 1, 2025, at her home in La Plata. Cindy and I have known each other for over 40 years. She has volunteered countless hours for over 30 years to the Charles County Arts Alliance (CCAA), including over 20 years serving on our Board of Directors as our Treasurer. Cindy also served for many years as Chair of our ArtsFest annual countywide arts festival, as Chair of our Scholarship Committee, and as a member of other CCAA committees. Cindy and I also had great fun together assisting at the Charles County Fair, staffing our CCAA membership tables at various community events and festivals, and decorating the Old Waldorf School for our CCAA Galas and receptions. Cindy and her husband Zeke happily served as our official bartenders! Cindy also hosted several of our offsite CCAA Board Retreats, and made so many other selfless contributions to our organization - far too numerous to list here. But most of all, I enjoyed my friendship with Cindy, especially our long chats together. Her dry, wry sense of humor always made me laugh, even during my darkest hours in 2024, when I lost my beloved husband Bob. I will greatly miss her.

On behalf of the CCAA Board of Directors, we extend our deepest sympathies to Zeke Johnson, their family members, and all of Cindy's friends in the Charles County arts community that she loved so much. We are deeply indebted to Cindy, and will be forever grateful for her long-term dedication to the Charles County Arts Alliance. We have included Cindy's Obituary on the next page. A "Celebration of Life" honoring Cindy will be held on October 13, 2025, 2:00 pm, at the Port Tobacco Players Theatre in La Plata.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our CCAA Grantee Organizations for FY 2025 for submitting your required CCAA Final Reports on time, by our July 22 deadline. No stragglers this year - thank you. That really helped us so much. It allowed us to easily "crunch the final numbers" you provided to us, and then submit our own required CCAA Final Report to the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) on time, by their August 15 deadline.

It is CCAA "grant time" again. Our "annual grant cycle" for FY 2026 will open on Wednesday, September 10, with our updated CCAA Grant Applications being posted to our website. This year's firm deadline for submission will be Friday, October 24. This gives everyone a full 6 weeks to complete and submit your grant applications. Please help us spread the word, far and wide. We want to ensure the entire Charles County arts community is aware of this outstanding competitive, merit-based opportunity for partial funding in the year ahead.

Next week, the 101st Charles County Fair will take place from September 10-14 at the Fairgrounds south of La Plata. Each year, the CCAA volunteers at the P.D. Brown Building, assisting with intake, hanging, supervising and takedown of artworks. We have our CCAA membership table there as well. And we support the People's Choice Awards with prizes. We always look forward to the County Fair. It is the annual great gathering of friends and neighbors in Charles County - all in one place, all at one time. If you'd like to volunteer to help us at the P.D. Brown Building this year, please contact our CCAA Staff (Alexandria and Mackenzie) asap and let them know. We'd love to have you join us.

Read all about it, and more, in this issue of the Arts Insider.



Diane Rausch
CCAA President



Obituary for Cynthia Lu "Cindy" Johnson

Obituary for Cynthia Lu "Cindy" Johnson

Cynthia Lu "Cindy" Johnson died unexpectedly at her La Plata, Maryland home on Monday, September 1. Born August 11, 1953, in Whidbey Island, Washington, she was 72 years old.

She is survived by her spouse, Michael "Zeke" Johnson, three children, Alex (Pei Pei) from San Antonio, TX; Bryan from Towson, MD; and Virginia from Waldorf. She also is survived by her granddaughter Nancie Brown (Max); sister Bea Myles O'Brien, and brothers Pat (Meri) and Danny (Peggy) Myles; a host of nieces and nephews and her special extended family.

Predeceasing Cynthia were her parents, Joe and Marion Myles, and her sisters Kris Myles and Ann Myles-Nagle.

Like her parents, Cindy was a stalwart with the Port Tobacco Players as a performer, director, producer and Board Member. She first appeared on the stage at age 8 in the melodrama, "Dirty Work at the Crossroads." She went on to perform in memorable roles as Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, Tevye's daughter Tzeitel in Fiddler on the Roof, Glinda in The Wiz, Big Momma in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Ginger in 1940s Radio Hour, and Fannie Brice in Funny Girl. Cindy performed in many other roles at the Players and Hard Bargain Farm and she was most proud of her co-direction of Steel Magnolias (recognized by the British Embassy Players) and the Port Tobacco Players' 40th anniversary celebration of the Port Tobacco Players. She also launched a Maryland Theater Festival and she and her husband, Zeke, were honored by them. She also received awards from the British Embassy Players, Charles County Arts Alliance as well as the David Schroeder Memorial Award for contributions to community theater in Maryland and across the DC Metropolitan Area. She was known for her persistence and commitment to advancing performing arts at all levels in Charles County, most actively with the Players, but also in Virginia, DC and across Maryland.

Cindy grew up in the Bryans Road/Indian Head area, attended Indian Head Elementary School, St. Mary's Star of the Sea School, and graduated from La Reine High School. She spent nearly 40 years working for Thomas Harkin Associates, Interstate General then St. Charles Associates, ending her career working with Meredith Management. In addition to her love of theater, she was an avid New Orleans Saints fan as well as University of Maryland.

Family and friends will host a Celebration of Life and Memorial Tribute to Cindy on October 13 at 2 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Port Tobacco Players (ptplayers.com) and/or the Charles County Arts Alliance.



ArtsCamp 2025 in Nanjemoy - A Great Success!

We received several nice letters from our ArtsCamp 2025 instructors. Enjoy!

Suzanne Donohue

Theater CCAA ArtsCamp Director

Dear Charles County Arts Alliance,

I am writing to express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to have participated as a theatre instructor in ArtsCamp 2025. The program continues to be a remarkable success, providing a vibrant and enriching experience for young artists in our community.

ArtsCamp 2025 delivered an engaging and dynamic arts education curriculum, fostering creativity and passion in the participating children. It was inspiring to witness firsthand how students embraced theatre, exploring their imaginations and developing their performance skills within a supportive and collaborative environment. The multi-disciplinary approach of ArtsCamp, exposing students to art, literature, dance, and theatre, offered a holistic and well-rounded arts experience that I believe is invaluable.

The dedication and expertise of the ArtsCamp staff were evident in the positive atmosphere and the students' enthusiastic participation. I was particularly impressed by the program's ability to create a cohesive and inclusive environment where children of diverse backgrounds and experience levels felt comfortable expressing themselves and collaborating effectively.

I believe ArtsCamp 2025 continues to be a vital resource for the youth of Charles County, nurturing their artistic talents, building confidence, and fostering a lifelong appreciation for the arts. I am deeply grateful for the chance to have contributed to this exceptional program and look forward to the possibility of participating in future ArtsCamp initiatives.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Donohue

Performance Organization/Presenter - Theater

Lew and Karen McIntyre

Literacy CCAA ArtsCamp Directors

The Writing Workshop component of the ArtsCamp was fantastic experience! Each day of the workshop, the students had a chance to write both poetry and prose pieces. They learned a bit about writing, and had a good time. They were enthusiastic, engaged, and super creative. It was a pleasure to spend time with them and I greatly enjoyed it.



ArtsCamp 2025 in Nanjemoy - A Great Success!



Brooke Howells

Dance CCAA ArtsCamp Director

My time at ArtsCamp this summer was a blast! I thoroughly enjoyed getting the kids moving through dance, songs from musicals and movies, and games. I had a great time getting to know the campers and learned so much about each one. It was a great week!



Kickoff of CCAA FY 2026 Annual Grant Program - Grant Applications Available September 10!

Kickoff of CCAA FY 2026 Annual Grant Program - Grant Applications Available September 10!

The CCAA is pleased to announce the opening of our **FY 2026 Arts Grant Program on September 10!** Since 1987, this program has been at the heart of our mission—supporting schools and nonprofit organizations that bring creativity, culture, and connection to our community.

Over the years, the CCAA has invested more than \$1,000,000 into the Charles County arts community through our arts grant program. Just last year, in FY 2025 we awarded \$90,300 to 13 non-profit organizations plus the Charles County Public Schools. These grants helped fund music, dance, dramatic, literary performances, art exhibitions, workshops, and arts education enhancements that touched the lives of Charles County residents of all ages.

Now, we invite you to join this tradition of creativity and community impact. Applications for our CCAA FY 2026 Grants open on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, and will close on Friday, October 24, 2025. The CCAA offers three types of arts grants: General Operating Grants, Special Projects Grants, and Arts in Education Grants.

Why Apply?

The CCAA Arts Grant Program provides vital funding to help schools and organizations expand their reach, strengthen their programs, and bring the arts to even more people. Whether you are building an after-school arts program, hosting a concert, creating a public art project, or developing a new cultural event, our grants can help you make it possible.

What We're Looking For

Applications are reviewed based on:

- Artistic merit of the proposed activities
- Organizational effectiveness and fiscal responsibility
- Service to the community

All applicants must provide a cash match within the same fiscal year with organizational funds, on a 1:1, 2:1, or 3:1 basis depending on the amount requested. This ensures that each CCAA grant truly becomes a joint partnership with the grantee organizations in support of their requested arts programming.

How to Apply

Nonprofit organizations and schools in Charles County are eligible. Full guidelines and application materials will be available on our website at charlescountyarts.org starting September 10. **Applications are due by October 24, 2025**, so don't wait to get started!

Need Help?

Our team is here to guide you through the process. For more information or questions, contact Alexandria at **301-392-5900** or ccaaofficeaa@gmail.com. The arts bring us together, spark imagination, and strengthen our community. We encourage every eligible organization and school to apply for the FY 2026 Arts Grant Program and help us continue building a vibrant and creative Charles County.

Meet New Featured Gallery Artists - Sally Goldsmith & Ivette Marcucci

Sally Goldsmith

Artist Biography

Born in the old La Plata (Physicians Memorial) Hospital. Raised in the Nanjemoy area and attended CCPSCHOOLS.

Took art in school and drew pictures, and enjoyed drawing, but got my first paint-by-numbers (oil). I liked doing them and wanted to get paints.

Got Married and raised 2 children. Built a house, did crafts and drew.

Worked as a bus driver and also worked with CCPFood Service and became a manager. Retired in 2012 after 19 years. I knew what I was going to do.

Took art in school and drew pictures, enjoyed drawing, but got my first paint by number (oil). I liked doing them, but I really wanted to paint myself.

I drew and did crafts as well. In 1976 I got my first paints of oils and tried to paint but it didn't look good, put them away. Started watching Bob Ross, Brenda Harris and Donna Dewberry even taped them, I decided to try again, by copying Bob Ross, did fair but I didn't like Oils and I found acrylic paints and got some of them, but when I tried to paint like oils it didn't work the same. Acrylics dry faster. I started to enjoy painting and that was my start. Painted pictures and gave them away as Christmas presents and even got people who wanted pictures painted. Painted after work, weekends, etc. I entered them in the fair.

I joined the CCArts Alliance and started having paintings hung at West Library, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, Chesapeake Bank and Commissioners Building. Charles County Fair. Won 3 Best in Show and a People's Choice Award.

At a yard sale we had at my church I brought some paintings with me as a conversation thing and I ended up selling 2 paintings. Now I have people sending me pictures and I like that.



Meet New Featured Gallery Artists - Sally Goldsmith & Ivette Marcucci

Ivette Marcucci

Artist Biography

I am a self-taught artist, born and raised in Puerto Rico, and now proud to call Southern Maryland home for the past 20 years. Growing up, my world was shaped by a love for reading, drawing, painting, and crafting—a creative spirit that continues to define who I am today. I began my artistic journey in 2014 and am grateful to be counted among the emerging visual artists of Charles County, Maryland.

My work is an exploration of self-expression and a reflection of my emotional landscape. I am deeply inspired by nostalgia, the passage of time, and the hope for what lies ahead. Through my collages, I weave together patterned papers, stamps, textures, found objects, and ephemeral materials to create layers of meaning and depth. These pieces are a visual representation of my journey through the past and into the future. In my abstract paintings, I give voice to my emotions through shapes, colors, and figures, allowing my imagination to guide me toward new forms of self-expression. Every piece is an experiment, an opportunity to push boundaries and explore new techniques that expand my creative horizons.



Since 2015, I have been honored to exhibit my work in various local galleries, including the Waldorf West Library Gallery, Community Bank of the Chesapeake, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, and Port Tobacco Courthouse, as well as the Torpedo Factory Gallery in Alexandria and Gallery B in Bethesda, MD. Each exhibition allows me to share my journey and connect with others through art.

Art, for me, is not just about creating—it is about feeling. As Picasso once said, "The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place, from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider web." This is the essence of my work—a continuous flow of emotion and expression drawn from the world around me.

To see more of my artwork or inquire about commissions, feel free to reach out to me at ivettemixedmedia@gmail.com and Instagram: #ivetteciart



Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) - The Council

Connect - Current Grant Opportunities



THE COUNCIL CONNECT

August 2025

As arts administrators, my colleagues and I spend a good amount of time at our computers. We provide application support, organize resources, and more! While I enjoy a good spreadsheet (who doesn't?), getting first-hand experience of the programs we fund is the most exciting part of the work.

When I go on arts education site visits, I get to experience how the arts make learning exciting and accessible for all. I've seen curiosity ignited as students explore ecosystems through songwriting. I've seen engagement increase as students dance to understand literacy and math concepts. I've seen creativity sparked as classrooms are transformed into theaters. I've seen school and community pride strengthened by collaborative mural-making.

From these experiences, it's clear that teaching artists are doing amazing work in our communities. And it's my pleasure to support this important work.

Warmly,

Lizzie Morales
Arts in Education Program Director
Accessibility Coordinator



Current Grant Opportunities



AiE Grant (for rostered artists)

Next deadline: September 5 (Rolling)

[Learn more](#) about program.



Heritage Award

Deadline: September 26

[Learn more](#) about program.



GFO - Intent to apply

Deadline: September 15

[Learn more](#) about program.



Arts Capital

Deadline: October 3

[Learn more](#) about program.

THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS!

PLATINUM CIRCLE

- Lorretta J. Hopkins
- Diane Rausch
- Clarissa Stroud

SILVER CIRCLE

- Ronald Brown
- Roy Jenkins
- Kathy Jenkins
- Keith Linville

CORPORATE

- dbF, a Media Company

ARTS PATRON

- Ann E. Benbow

ARTS SPONSOR

- Nancy Owens
- Edward L. Sanders Insurance Agency, Inc.
- William & Dianne Shisler

ARTS ACTIVIST

- Gabriel Gallagher

BUSINESS

- Business Training Works, Inc.

FAMILY

- Burkey & Margaret Boggs
- Richard & Margery Coppola
- Ricky & Ellen Flowers-Fields
- Laurie & Joe Fialkowski
- Cindy Johnson
- Gale Kladitis
- Tanika & Roderick Mance
- Barbara McCarthy
- John & Mary Lou Rutherford
- John & Lucy Snell
- Pamela Vincent

INDIVIDUAL

- Christopher Albert
- Nikki Bradburn
- Brooke-Lynn Chapman
- Mary Evelyn Dashiell
- Jaden Hendricks
- Barbara Hufford
- Kenneth Jameson
- Dimitri Nassar
- Deirdre Pender
- Thomas Savoy
- Cathy Thompson

YOUTH

- Ada Donohue
- Mariah Harris
- Munachimso Nkemakolam
- Tobi Ojo
- Julia Pender
- Jael K. Potter
- Alex Urso

SENIOR

- Susie Bender
- Thea Bradley
- Claire Brooks
- Toi Brooks
- Rose Burroughs
- Cheri Burch
- Carol Y. Charnock
- Carol Corbett
- Jerri Corbett
- Dorothy Crown
- Holly Dilatush
- Chris Dudley
- Cecelia Dunay
- Patricia Duncan
- Gwendolyn A. Fleming
- Florence Foster
- Richard Gilpin
- Joselle Gilpin
- Richard Gold
- Penelope Gold
- Sally Marie Goldsmith
- Doris Hall
- Sharon Hanley
- Billie Harley
- Ruth Hein
- Elvernetta Henderson
- Renée Jefferson-Copeland
- William Jones
- Rona Kelley
- Robert Kyle
- Carlyle Lancaster
- Dorothy Lancaster
- Beverlie J. Ludy
- Mary Mangino
- Ivette Marcucci
- Karen McIntyre
- Lew McIntyre
- Henry McPherson

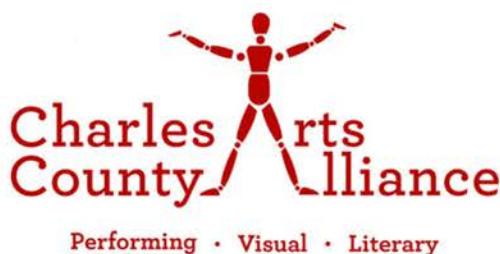
SENIOR (cont'd)

- Robert Medley Sr.
- Julie Anne Meisel
- Connie Miller
- Dara Mills
- Kathleen Noel
- Marie C. Parham
- Shirley Ann Perez
- Ann Cameron Siegal
- Dorothea H. Smith
- Jill Smithson
- Richard Thompson
- Evans Thorne
- Paul Toscano
- Zsuzsanna Volkman
- John Wilson

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

- African American Heritage Society of Charles County
- Charles County Public Library
- Charles County Youth Orchestra
- Chesapeake Choral Arts Society
- Friends of Old Waldorf School
- Life Journeys Writers Guild
- Maryland Writers Association
- Mattawoman Creek Art Center
- Music Teachers Association of Charles County
- National Association of American African Dance Teachers
- Neighborhood Creative Arts Center
- Opening Night Productions
- Phoenix International School of the Arts
- Port Tobacco Players
- Southern Maryland Concert Band
- Southern Maryland Decorative Painters

CCAA MEMBERSHIP FORM



The mission of the Charles County Arts Alliance is to stimulate, promote, encourage and provide recognition of the arts and the creative spirit in Charles County, MD

**Show Your Support for the Arts by
Joining the CCAA!**

The benefits of CCAA membership last year-round:

- CCAA Arts Insider monthly E-newsletter
- CCAA Arts Newsflash weekly E-update of arts events
- CCAA voting privileges
- And most important, the satisfaction that comes from actively supporting the arts in Charles County!

**Membership Categories
(check one):**

Platinum Circle - \$500

Date

Gold Circle - \$300

Submitted:

Silver Circle - \$200

Full Name:

Arts Patron - \$150

Organization/

Arts Sponsor - \$125

Business:

Arts Activist - \$80

Address:

Family - \$50

City:

State:

Zip:

Individual - \$30

Phone:

Senior (+60) - \$20

Email:

Youth (under 18) - \$10

Business & Nonprofit:

Corporate - \$500

Business - \$250

Nonprofit Organizations - \$75

Other (Donations) _____

The CCAA is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization.

All membership dues and donations are 100 percent tax-deductible.

Renewal

New Member

Date

Submitted:

Full Name:

Organization/

Business:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Want to volunteer? We'd love the help!

ArtsFest

Grants

Budget/Finance/Audit

Membership

Scholarships

Outreach/Marketing

Events

Administrative/Office

Galleries

Technical/IT Support

Charles County Arts Alliance, Inc.
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www.charlescountyarts.org / 301-392-5900
info@charlescountyarts.org

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